



September 29, 2009

A second draft of the College and Career Readiness Standards has recently been released from the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards are available to view <http://www.corestandards.org/Standards/index.htm>. The NGA and CCSSO are requesting public feedback that is supported by research and evidence by October 21, 2009.

This summer, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) staff, in conjunction with a panel of secondary educators and university professors, extensively reviewed the first draft of the National Common Core Standards, the College and Career Readiness Standards, for mathematics and English language arts. These reviewers included educators who have been involved in the standards revision process in Montana and are respected members of the Montana education community. On July 31, 2009, a summary of the review panel's comments was sent to Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director CCSSO.

The summary included concerns about specific aspects of the document. The entire document is available on the Office of Public Instruction Web site <http://opi.mt.gov/CCSSO/index.html>.

The following are taken from the Montana comments:

- There is an omission of any recognition of any or all culture; specifically the cultural heritage of Montana American Indians.
 - Culture is not incorporated into the second draft.
- These readiness standards must realistically address career readiness. These readiness standards appear to be a "sorter" of students; academia versus the world of work.
 - There is a resonating need for the second draft to address this comment. The standards need to be written for all Montana students regardless of the path they choose after completing high school.
- The College and Career Readiness Standards for Mathematics are not a balanced set of concepts, emphasis on Algebra.
 - Critical concepts for finance, medicine, and other areas for workforce are deficient.

The review team's comments were not all addressed in the recently released second draft document. Our Nation deserves quality readiness standards created through a more inclusive K-16 process. The NGA and CCSSO's process of creating standards, although researched and evidence-based, is not as transparent as Montana Standard's development process. The OPI looks forward to a set of K-12 standards that are rigorous and challenging as well as attainable to all students.


There are two pieces that clarify the question about adopting these standards. First, the Memorandum of Agreement signed by Superintendent Juneau and Governor Schweitzer states, "This effort is voluntary for states, and it is fully intended that states adopting the common core standards may choose to include additional state standards beyond the common core standards. States that choose to align their standards to the common core standards agree to ensure that the common core represents at least 85 percent of the state's standards in English language arts and Mathematics."

Second, the Board of Public Education (BPE) Statement of Purpose outlines a required process for standards development. It is the BPE's responsibility to adopt the content standards for Montana. The BPE's Statement of Purpose follows:

1. Use the existing Montana Standards Framework --current accreditation program delivery and foundation standards, content and performance standards and benchmarks, and existing structure (4th, 8th, and upon graduation);
2. Use proven practices from Montana classrooms;
3. Consider international, national and other states' standards;
4. Consider entrance expectations for work place and postsecondary education;
5. Consider achievement and other related data;
6. Consider other research e.g., Education Northwest, School Redesign Network, Understanding By Design, Effective Schools Research, etc.;
7. Consider comments from professional education associations;
8. Consider comments from tribal and school district educators;
9. Consider recommendations from Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education; and
10. Involve the Montana public.

Therefore, Montana will proceed with the implementation of the Montana Content Standards process. The Mathematic Content Standards were adopted by the Board of Public Education in September 2009. The Communication Arts Standards are in the final stages of revision and will begin the adoption process later this fall.

The National Draft College and Career Readiness Standards are the foundation for the next phase of the national initiative to develop a set of K-12 standards to be released by January 2010. The Office of Public Instruction will conduct a thorough analysis of the K-12 standards for mathematics and English language arts. The OPI will gather comments from educational stakeholders to provide an informed recommendation to the Board of Public Education to ensure that every child graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the 21st century global society.

The Office of Public Instruction encourages you to submit your comments supported by research and evidence. The survey link can be found [CCSSI Feedback Survey](#)  or at <http://opi.mt.gov/CCSSO/index.html>.

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